

For the Examiner's convenience, a complete listing of the claims is provided below.

Listing of Claims:

1. (Previously Presented) An encapsulation device for the repair of an articular cartilage defect, the device comprising:

a body having a generally annular frame supporting therein a solid shell-like cover portion for disposition adjacent a bone in an area of the cartilage defect;

an elongated leg structure comprising a plurality of elongated leg members, each extending from a distal side of said body for disposition in the bone in the area of the cartilage defect, said leg members each having a length which is a plurality of magnitudes greater than a thickness of said body, and being of a generally conical configuration along substantially the length thereof;

said annular frame comprising a peripheral frame portion, and said cover portion being integral with said frame portion and disposed within said frame and of a configuration bowed proximally to always provide a bowed proximal end profile for engagement by a complementary-shaped tool head, and adapted to maintain that profile during engagement of said body with the tool head; and

each of said leg members being provided with a central channel therein, each of the channels opening on a proximal side of said frame and extending substantially the length of each of said leg members to a point proximate a closed distal end thereof;

wherein at least one of said leg members is provided at a distal end thereof with an end portion enlarged beyond a periphery of said leg member at a proximal end of the end portion and a generally crested end portion at a distal end of the end portion.

2. (Cancelled)

3. (Previously Presented) The device in accordance with claim 1 wherein each of said leg member end portions comprises a circumferential protrusion thereon for gripping the bone.

4-8 (Cancelled).

9. (Previously Presented) The device in accordance with claim 1 wherein said peripheral frame portion bounds said cover portion.

10-15 (Cancelled).

16. (Original) The encapsulation device in accordance with claim 1 wherein the device is of a selected one of (i) bioabsorbable material and (ii) bioremodelable material.

17. (Original) The encapsulation device in accordance with claim 1 wherein the device is impregnated with cell growth material.

18-19 (Cancelled).

20. (Currently amended) A method for effecting a repair to an articular cartilage defect, the method comprising the steps of:

providing an encapsulation device comprising a body for disposition adjacent a bone in an area of the cartilage defect, and an elongated leg structure comprising a plurality of elongated leg members extending from the body for disposition in the bone in the area of the cartilage defect, the elongated leg structure comprising legs, each leg provided with a central channel therein, the channel being open on a proximal side of the frame member and extending substantially the length of each of the leg members to a point proximate a closed distal end thereof;

the body comprising a peripheral circular frame portion and a solid shell-like cover portion fixed within the frame portion and of a configuration bowed proximally therefrom to provide a bowed proximal surface, such that a central portion of the cover portion always extends proximally further than a peripheral portion of the cover portion;

producing an elongated hole in the bone for each leg of the encapsulation device leg structure;

receiving a distal end of an insertion tool within the central channels of each of the leg members; and

driving each leg of the leg structure of the encapsulation device into the hole provided therefore in the bone to bring a distal surface of the bowed encapsulation device body into adjacency with the bone.

21. (New) The encapsulation device in accordance with claim 1 wherein each of the central channels is substantially tapered along the length thereof.

22. (New) The method in accordance with claim 20 wherein each of the central channels is substantially tapered along the length thereof.